World War II

The largest event looming over all of the U.S. during this time was World War II. Pearl Harbor was fresh in the minds of everyone, only having happened in December, 1941, the year before. The local paper, The Lemonter, reflected how that affected the community.

"The Characteristics of a Good American" essay here is written by then-high-schooler James Brown, which won first place in an Americanism essa contest hosted by the American Legion.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD AMERICAN

NOTE—The Lemonter presents herewith the essay of James Brown of the Lemont Township High school which took first prize in the annual Americanism contest of the Ladies Auxiliary to Lemont Post No. 243, American Legion. It is worth careful perusal by every citizen of this region in these perilous days—THE EDITOR.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD AMERICAN

BY JAMES BROWN

First Prize Winner

Any of the inherent qualities known as virtues may be characteristics of a good American. However as every American is a citizen of a democracy we must give first consideration to those virtues that are directly in keeping with democratic forms.

A good American is intelligent; ignorance is generally recognized as the first pitfall to democracy. There are numerous occasions upon which the citizen is called to exercise his intelligence. Our democracy is a government for the individual and the individual formulates his own opinions. It is of the utmost importance to all, that the opinions he attains concerning office-seekers, our foreign and domestic policies, and his own duties are not in error.

Closely allied with intelligence is tolerance; it has often been said that one breeds the other. And it is my opinion that tolerance in its finest constructive sense is the most noble and essential characteristic that can be possessed by an American. The revolution was fought to do away with intolerance, the Constitution was formed to establish its negative, and the Bill of Rights was designed to make it forever secure.

It was that seasoned philosopher, Voltaire, who spoke of tolerance in this manner, "I disagree with what the man says, but I agree with his rights to say it." It is to be wished that this worthy attitude was held by every American and if the time ever comes when the majority of the people do not hold with it the flame of Liberty will be dimmed and become extinct.

The nation's state of war will bring to light another attribute which is generally left in the background. The act of freely sacrificing for one's country has always been recognized as a desirable and worthy characteristic.

It has been called loyalty and it is indeed hard to distinguish between loyalty and willingness to sacrifice. If a citizen is willing to sacrifice, he is loyal, and if he is loyal he is willing to sacrifice, thus the two are interchangeable.

It is needless to point out the many sacrifices, large and small that must be made in order for our cause to triumph. The manner in which these sacrifices are made will determine to what degree we are good Americans.

There are many other characteristics involved in the personality of a good American. However, it is my opinion that intelligence, tolerance and loyalty are the three most important and it is hardly possible to emulate these three and not excell in many of the subordinate ones as well.

We may also be certain that as long as there are individuals in this country who are intelligent, tolerant and willing to sacrifice for the common good, the destiny of our country will continue to be secure!

AUTO QUOTA IS TAKEN HERE FOR EACH OF MONTHS

Wasted Quotas of Other Places Would Be Appreciated Here in Lemont

While other communities are complaining that the public seems not to realize that there are a few new automobiles available each month, providing that one can establish that he is eligible under the rationing system set-up, this condition does not apply to Cook County District Rationing Board No. 27 in Lemont, according to Walter L. Bush, chairman.

The reason perhaps, is because the allotment to this district is so small that there is always some eligible person needing a machine to take the one car allowed to be sold here each month, so far.

If Lemont had some of Blue Island's quota of six cars, not one of which were sold last month, there is little doubt but what such cars could be placed here. Of Blue Island's quota of five cars this month, only a new city emergency patrol has been considered for approval.

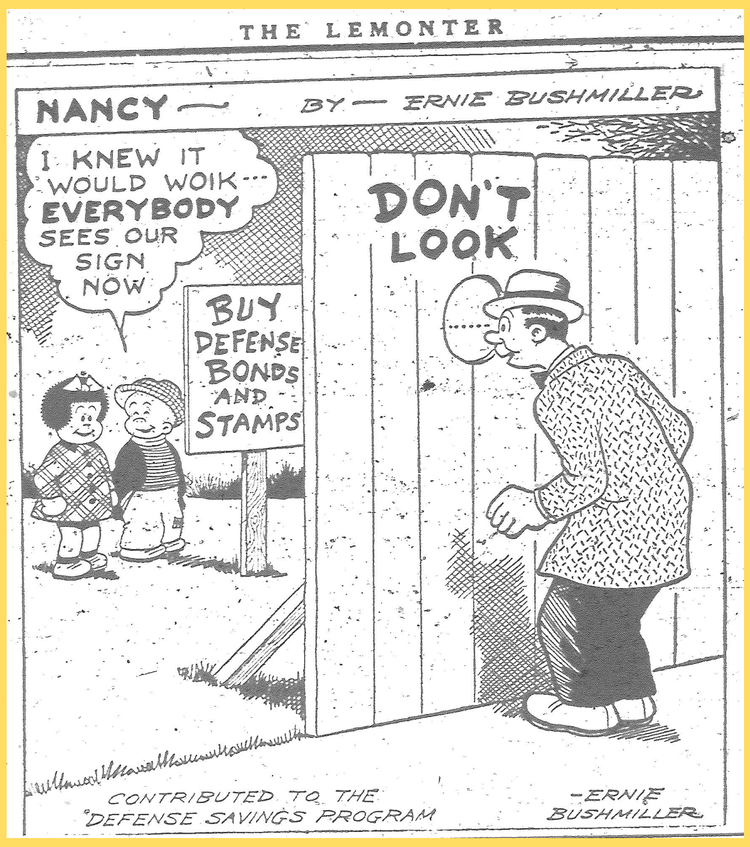
Some tire recap applications are being received by the Lemont rationing board, and all tire allotments made for this community are taken almost before they are allotted, by those who can prove their eligibility.

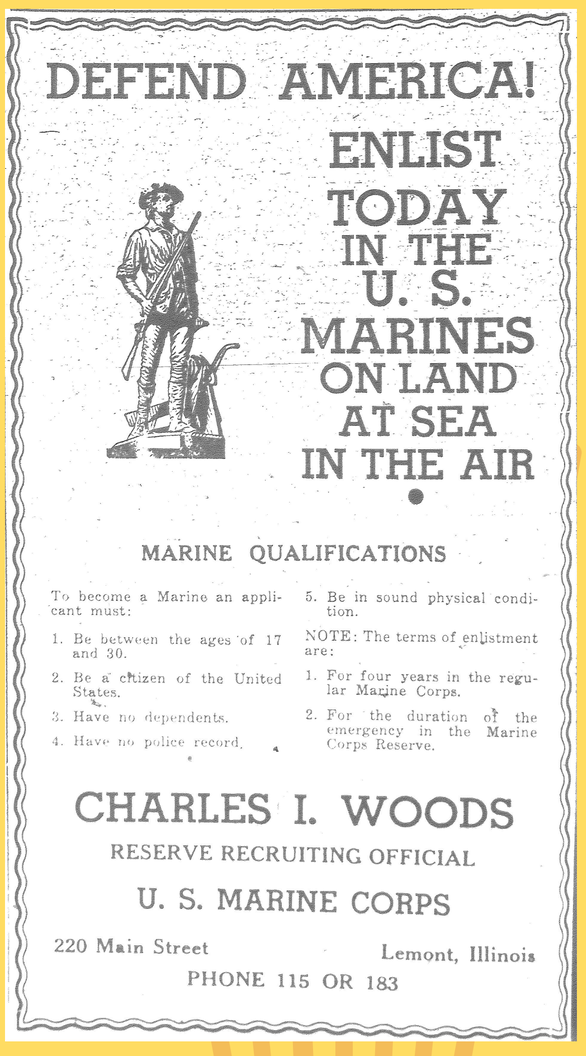
The local war rationing board is now considering plans for enlargement of service and employment of clerical help which is almost certain to be required after the registration has been made for sugar and other food rationing and the "baby" has been "dumped into the lap" of the board.

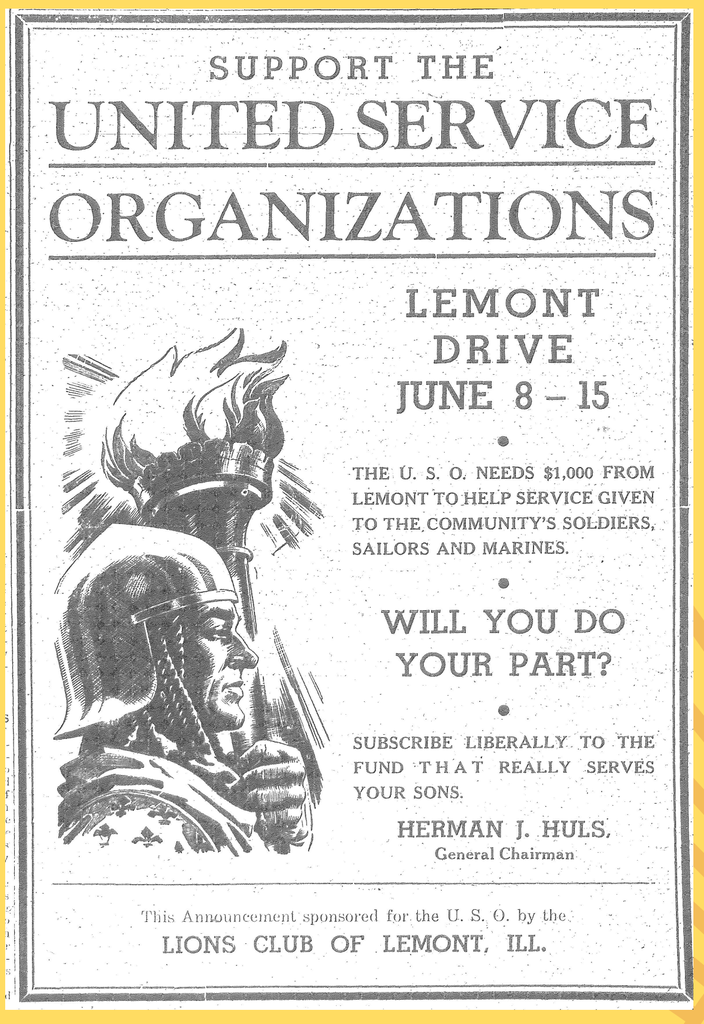
The one automobile allotted to Lemont during March, went to Dr. E. R. Blondis, while Dr. Frank A. Walter got the machine allowed here for April. Both of these professional men are on the preferred eligibility list.

Do your share! Buy Defense Bonds and Savings Stamps.

"The nation's state of war will bring to light another attribute . . . The act of freely sacrificing for one's country has always been recognized as a desirable and worthy characteristic. It has been called loyalty . . ."







Ads for enlistment, bond buying, and support for service members were common, spread throughout the news.

For more 1940s hits, listen to our curated playlist:

Fashion

Women's Hairstyles

Hairstyles popular for women at the time included the peekaboo curl and the victory rolls styles. Actress Veronica Lake popularized the peekaboo curl, which hung in front of the face and was popular in noir films, but when women began working with heavy machinery, she changed her style to the classic "V" shaped victory rolls to encourage a style safer for the workplace.

Dressing Up

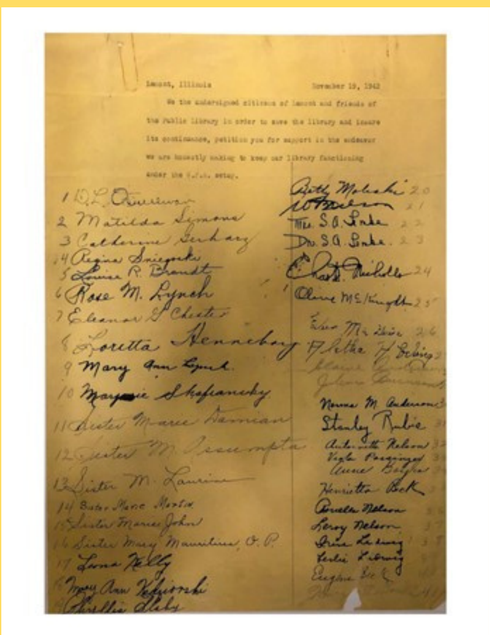
Women's fashion tended towards squared and padded shoulders, a narrow hip, and straight, mid-length skirts. It was very much a powerful silhouette that mimicked men's sharp suits.

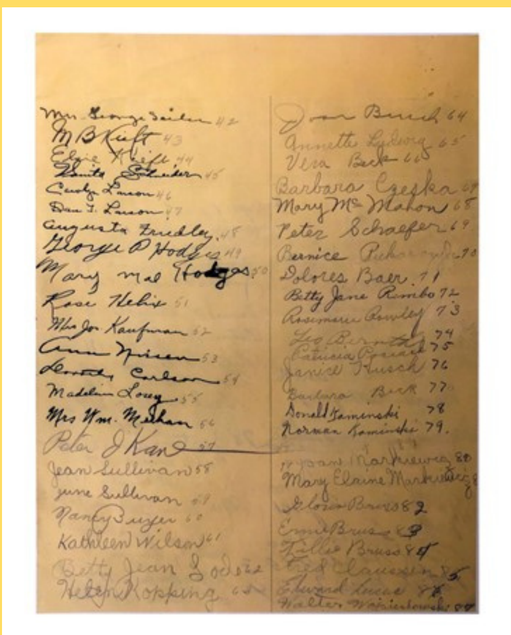
While rationing led to some materials not being as available, hats were a popular way to accessorize and experiment. Styles from all over the globe and past were used - from pillboxes to snoods to turbans.

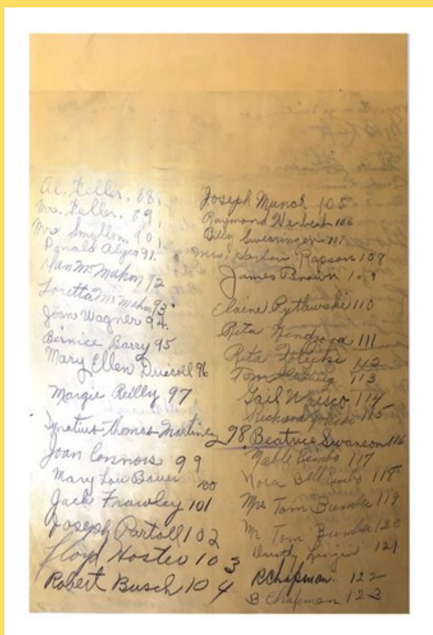
For more 1940s hits, listen to our curated playlist:

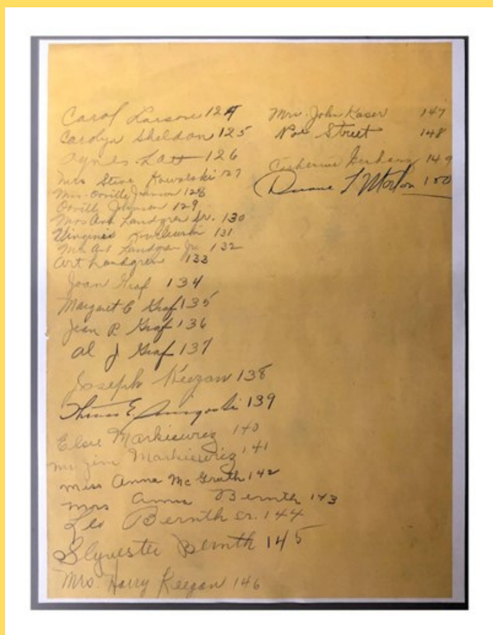
Lemont

in the 1940s

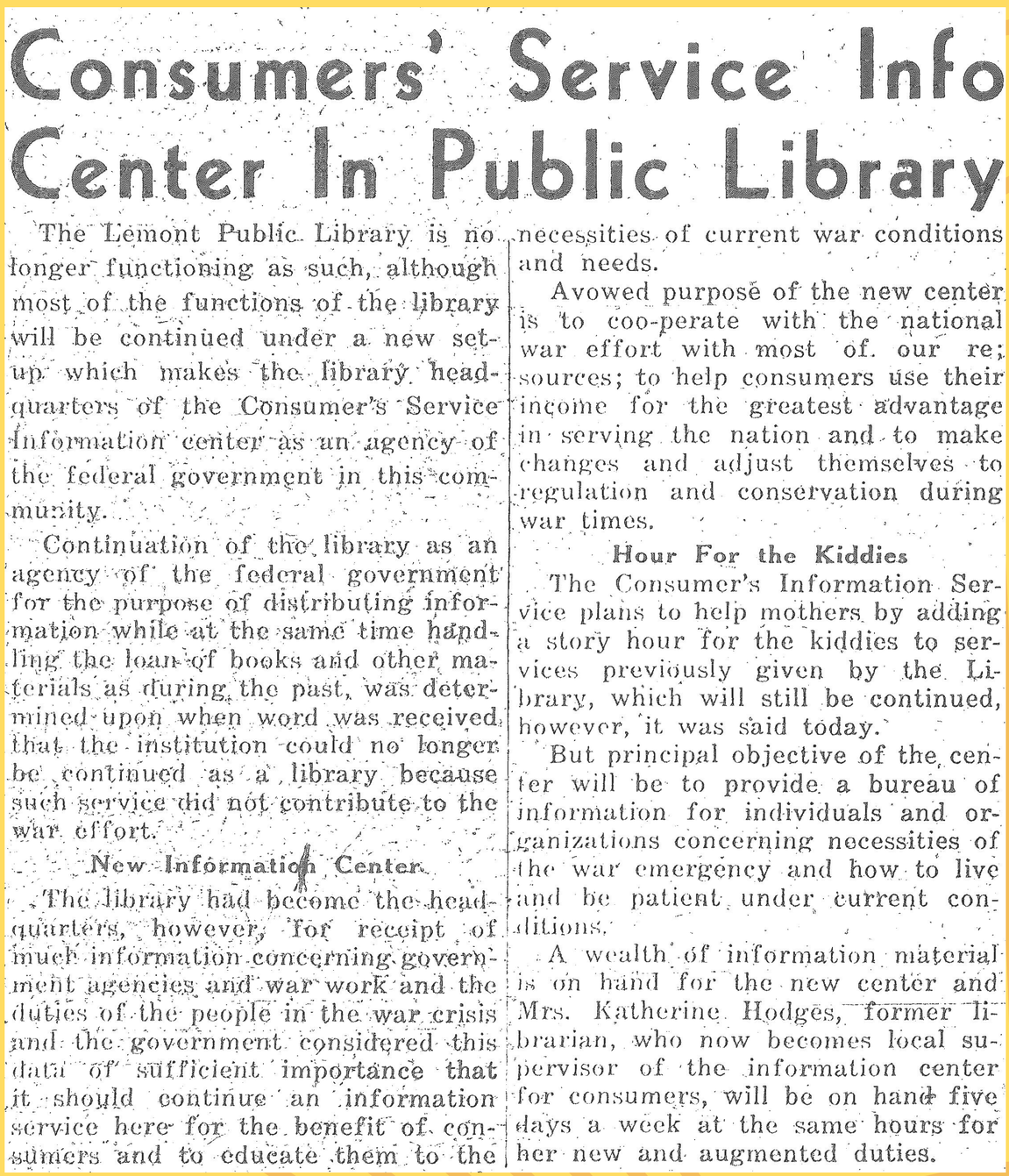








"We the undersigned citizens of Lemont and friends of the Public Library in order to save the library and insure its continuance, petition you for support in the endeavor we are honestly making to keep our library functioning under the W.P.A. setup." -November 19, 1942



Consumers' Service Info Center In Public Library

The Lemont Public Library is no longer functioning as such, although most of the functions of the library will be continued under a new set-up which makes the library headquarters of the Consumer's Service information center as an agency of the federal government in this community.

Continuation of the library as an agency of the federal government for the purpose of distributing information while at the same time handling the loan of books and other materials as during the past, was determined upon when word was received that the institution could no longer be continued as a library because such service did not contribute to the war effort.

New Information Center

The library had become the headquarters, however, for receipt of much information concerning government agencies and war work and the duties of the people in the war crisis and the government considered this data of sufficient importance that it should continue an information service here for the benefit of consumers and to educate them to the necessities of current war conditions and needs.

Avowed purpose of the new center is to coo-perate with the national war effort with most of our re; sources; to help consumers use their income for the greatest advantage in serving the nation and to make changes and adjust themselves to regulation and conservation during war times.

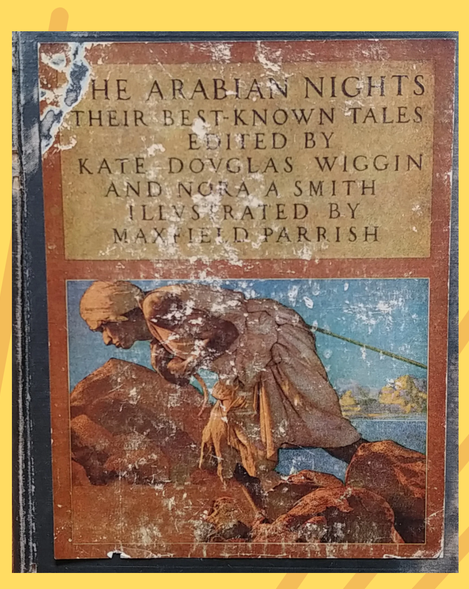
Hour For the Kiddies

The Consumer's Information Service plans to help mothers by adding a story hour for the kiddies to services previously given by the Library, which will still be continued, however, it was said today.

But principal objective of the center will be to provide a bureau of information for individuals and organizations concerning necessities of the war emergency and how to live and be patient under current conditions.

A wealth of information material is on hand for the new center and Mrs. Katherine Hodges, former librarian, who now becomes local supervisor of the information center for consumers, will be on hand five days a week at the same hours for her new and augmented duties.

A petition began so that the library could better serve Lemont as a whole. Support for the war effort was important, but in trying times, information access mattered, too, and so supporters rallied.



One of the books donated that year was an edition of 1001 Arabian Nights to the Children's collection.

For more 1940s hits, listen to our curated playlist:

Food

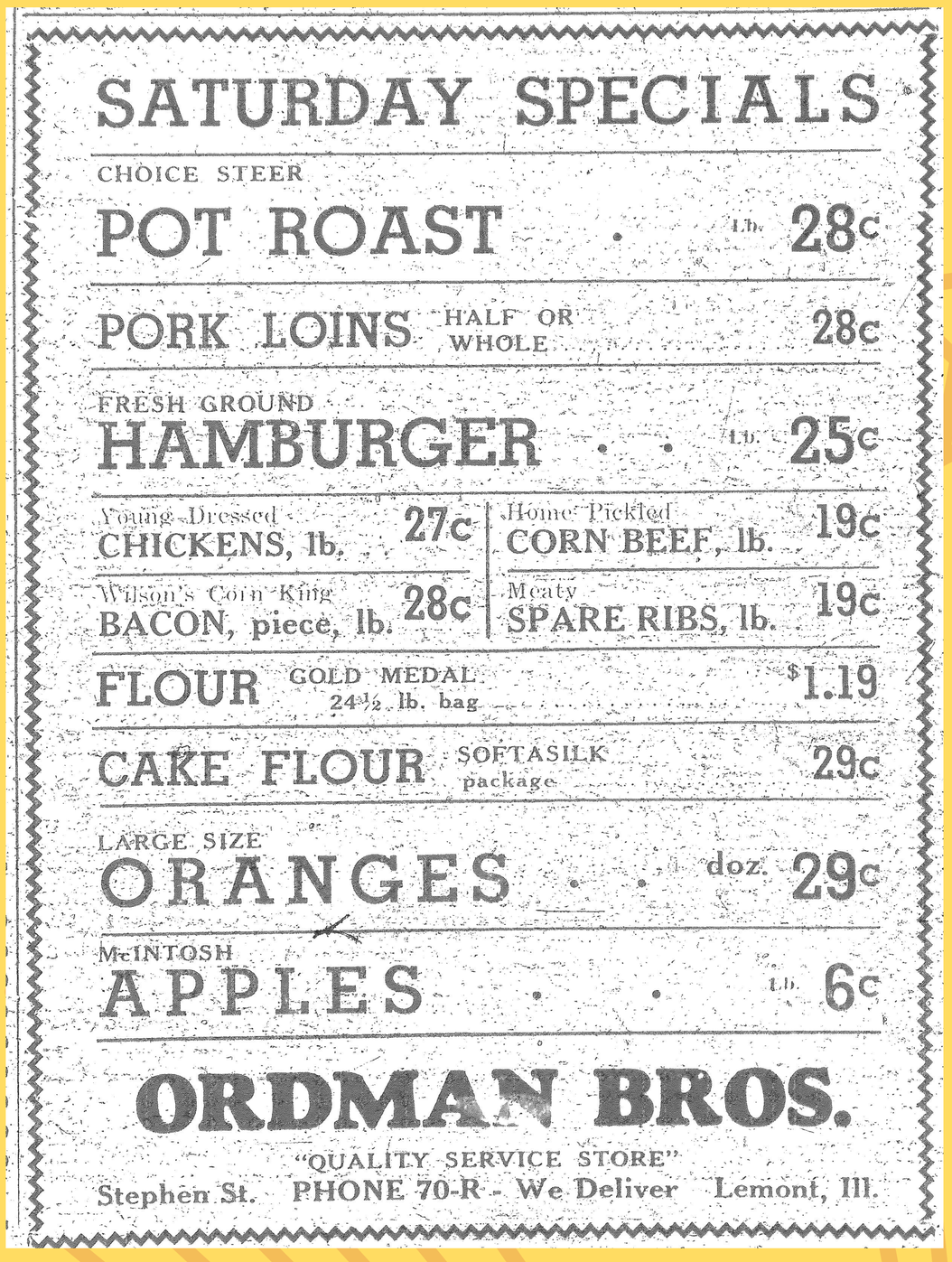
In order to conserve energy, time, and resources for the war effort, food rationing was a major way the average family could contribute. Sugar, butter, and coffee were some of the most common foods to be rationed, and when Lemont High school was hosting cooking classes in 1942, a lot of recipes to replace those ingredients popped up in the news.

Sweet Treats and Sugar Rations - Honey Pecan Cookies

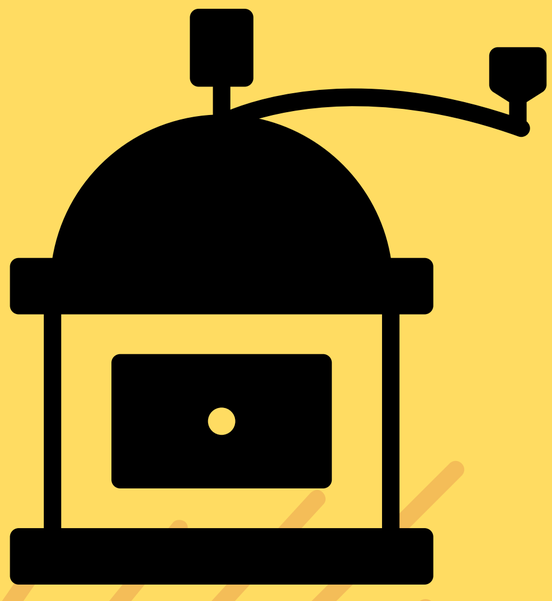
Pulled from a 1942 edition of the Lemonter newspaper in celebration of a cooking school at the high school, make some cookies using honey instead of sugar, just like people rationing away sugar for the war! Makes about 40 cookies

Ingredients:
1 cup shortening
⅓ cup light honey
⅓ cup packed brown sugar
1 tsp vanilla extract
1 egg
1 ¾ cups sifted all purpose flour
½ tsp salt
1 ½ cups ground pecan nuts

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
2. Mix flour, salt, and ground nuts, sifting together.
3. In a different bowl, cream shortening, honey, and sugar together until light and fluffy.
4. Add vanilla and egg to the honey mixture, beating thoroughly. Add flour and nut mixture slowly and mix well.
5. Grease a cookie sheet or line with parchment paper. Use a teaspoon to drop small dough balls evenly on the sheet and bake 15-20 minutes. Let cool and serve.


SATURDAY SPECIALS
CHOICE STEER POT ROAST lb. 28c
PORK LOINS HALF OR WHOLE 28c
FRESH GROUND HAMBURGER lb. 25c
Young Dressed CHICKENS, lb. 27c
Home Pickled CORN BEEF, lb. 19c
Wilson's Corn King BACON, piece, lb. 28c
Meaty SPARE RIBS, lb. 19c
FLOUR GOLD MEDAL 24½ lb. bag $1.19
CAKE FLOUR SOFTASILK package 29c
LARGE SIZE ORANGES doz. 29c
McINTOSH APPLES lb. 6c
ORDMAN BROS.
"QUALITY SERVICE STORE"
Stephen St. PHONE 70-R - We Deliver Lemont, Ill.

Audio and video advertising were still in their early stages, so finding out prices and local business ads were primarily found in the paper.



While many appliances had been invented, automation in the house was not popularized until a bit later, so coffee grinders, like the one here, were hand-cranked.

SCAN ME

Featured here is Christmas 1946 in Lemont, the two boys George and Tracy Walker. The Walker family were friends of the Ludwigs.' The Walker Family owned Illinois Pure Aluminum. The factory manufactured "Walker Ware."

For more 1940s hits, listen to our curated playlist:

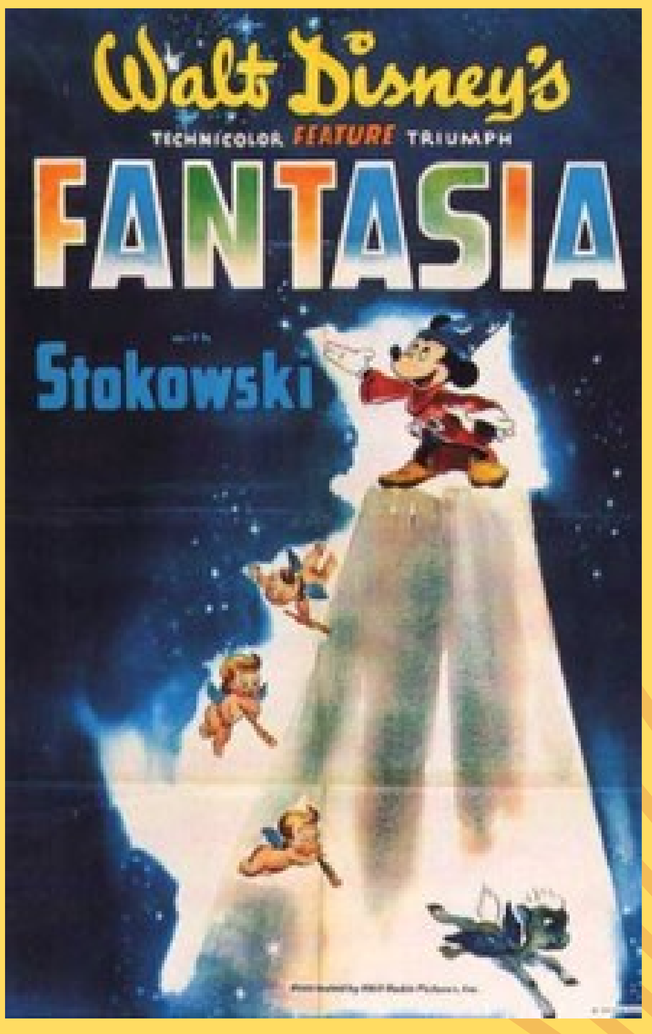
Pop Culture

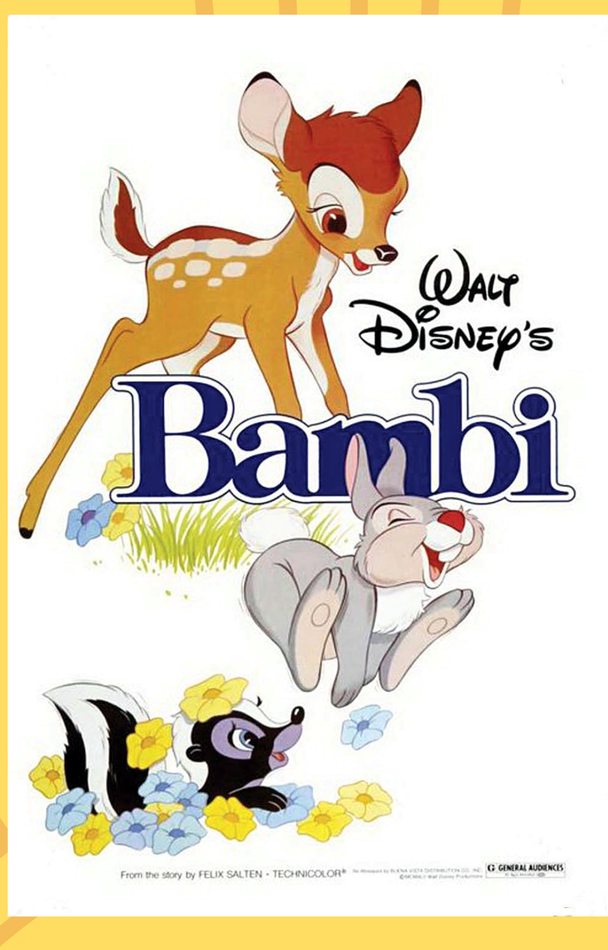
Wonder Woman in Sensation Comics, 1942

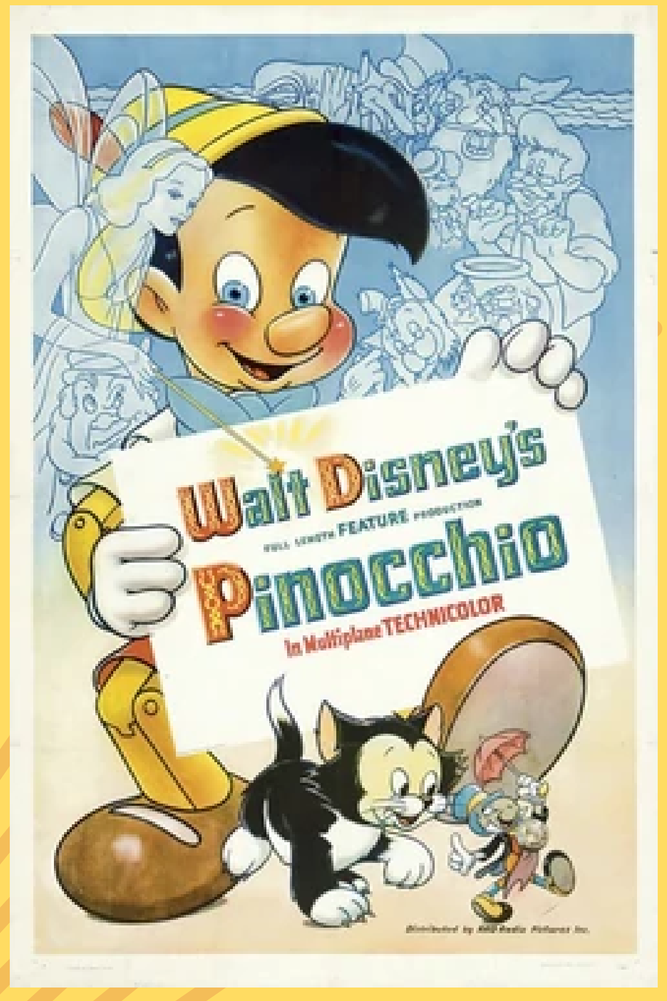
Some favorite heroes appeared in this time, and we still keep talking about them. Wonder Woman, Aquaman, Captain America, and other familiar faces first appeared then.

Wonder Woman 1984 Warner Brothers, 2020

Some of the most classic, iconic children's films were created in this time. Some familiar ones might be Disney's Fantasia and Bambi.







For more 1940s hits, listen to our curated playlist:

Women in the Workforce

Nurses

One of the positions most often associated with women in World War II in the military are nurses - and for good reason.

During the war, a huge influx of women joining the military took on nursing positions, even in unofficial capacities.

Stenograph

Stenographs were primarily used to create written records for legal proceedings, minutes for meetings, and, most importantly in this time: to transcribe correspondence and military matters.

Women were the primary stenographers in most workplaces.

Rosie the Riveter - Factory Jobs

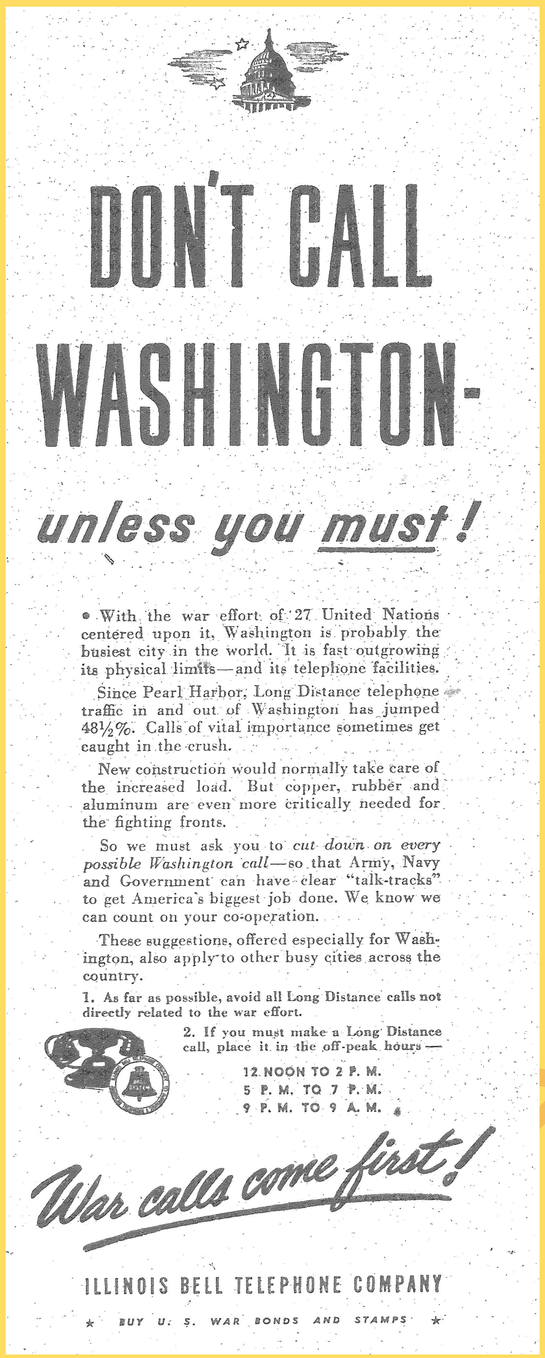
"Rosie the Riveter" is likely the most well-known figure of women in the war - a symbol of the many women who took on shipyard and munitions jobs that soldiers stepped away from.

For more 1940s hits, listen to our curated playlist:

Technology

Phones

Phone ettiquette was still relatively new, and operator centers directed long-distance calls. Phone books and news ads educated the public on the best ways to use phones.



Film from this time is still amazing quality - Watch this film from Mr. John J. Ludwig's collection!
Working on sidewalks in front of 314 Illinois Street, downtown Lemont, Illinois. Also, Jack Ludwig's 1st birthday party, at 314 Illinois Street, September 1941 (which was filmed in 1942).

SCAN ME

Cameras

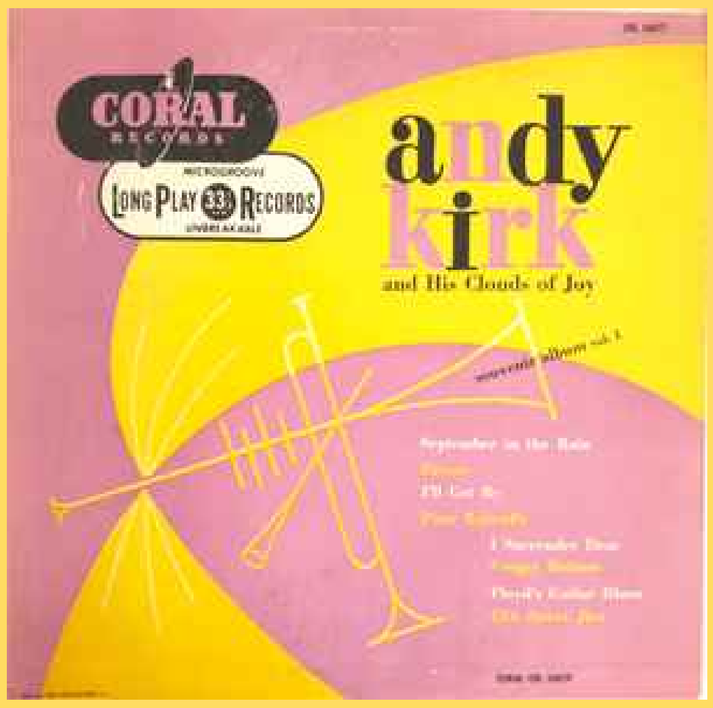
Photography and film was more common by the time the 1940s came around - though the devices were rudimentary by our standards, many of the functions they serve work relatively the same now, barring digital capabilities.

For more 1940s hits, listen to our curated playlist:

Music

Big Band

Popular music of the 1940s was an eclectic mix of all the popular music of the past two decades combined with exposure to global music influences and high energy. Jazz and blues gained higher tempos, and boogie and swing music meant for dancing moved to the top of the charts.



Big Artists

Some of the top artists of the time included the Andrews Sisters, Bing Crosby, Duke Ellington, Nat King Cole, and Glen Miller - all names that dominated the music scene and voices that still ring in our ears.

For more 1940s hits, listen to our curated playlist: